

Hello There

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 27 Nov 1998

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m.driussi — 27 Nov 1998, 23:00

Wow, go away for a few days and come back to find lots of stuff! Now that's a happy thing.

First off, a long overdue report on WFC98. I'll start with details and maybe later I'll get back to the main overview. Alga was there and Patrick O'Leary was there and we all saw each other and I had a good time (oops, maybe that was the overview?). As usual, I tried to pressure alga into writing a Wolfe essay, and the same for Patrick. <Bo-ring!> (It was during lunch on Fisherman's Wharf.) But where I really failed was, I should've praised Patrick for his review of THE BOOK OF THE LONG SUN (the =entire tetralogy=) in "Science Fiction Eye," since it is quite difficult to convince people to do more of a certain thing while at the same time ignoring their achievements in that vein. SO there you have it: Patrick has written some Wolfe stuff, he will write more when time permits, and for this I am grateful. And alga, aside from being just the muse herself, she does a lot of work on the booklets, and I think she has promised to do a lot of work on the next book, should such a thing erupt, so really, I have no business trying to wrestle these people into more Wolfe-related work. (More about WFC98 later . . .)

Sgt. Rock,

I think that when Paul Duggan wrote "GW's Commissar kills Seargent to prevent squad from routing," the "GW" stands not for "Gene Wolfe" but for "Games Workshop," the UK gaming company whose product Paul is contrasting with Urth. It was ambiguous. As for your comments on trench warfare, I don't have any argument really, and I think they add to what I was saying about battlefield context, not in the (main) sense of it being inherently irrational (since you are saying that they were being rational within their given frames of reference), but in the sense of seeing a battle from outside of its original time/space situation (that is: our "modern" reactions to WWI are equally removed from its situation as our reactions are to the Ascan/Commonwealth War). Then again, if I really wanted to argue in that thread regarding indifference to high casualties and the pressing need to punch through the front and win the war I'd ask about gas warfare and flechette rifles--but I don't, I don't!

Peter Nagle,

Re: Latin translation, thanks!

Re: Napoleonic warfare as closer to Urth, this has clear validity (i.e., trench warfare ala WWI is strictly out). But Napoleonic lacks air power, and while I don't want to bring up Korea again, still, there you had some WWII equipment being used in a post-WWII environment (I'm especially thinking of the P-51 Mustang fighter planes, propeller planes among jet fighters).

But mainly I think that we're all in agreement that this quiet little Armageddon has units from all across the timeline and spectrum of Warfare--as if it really =were= the Final Battle, and all the previous champions were raised up to do mighty deeds. (It isn't, of course; it is just another day at the front--a battle that doesn't really matter much in the big war.) We've got =slingers= for

Pete's sake! And archers. And half-nekkid guys on horseback. And ufos. And martian tripods (the text quote has to do with towers walking on the Last Day). And girls, girls, girls! We've got ancient units, medieval units, futuristic units, and magic units.

Nigel Price,

Welcome aboard! Yes, I wrote/published/continue to sell LEXICON URTHUS. (Thank you for your kind words about it.) Then came some eight booklets, most of which are Wolfe related (the only non-Wolfe title is "Vance Space," a travel guide to the science fiction worlds of Jack Vance, reviewed in "Locus" and "Science Fiction Age" and "Asimov's"), one of which is out of print ("The Quick & Dirty Guide to the Long Sun Whorl"). At which point even =I= begin to say, "This isn't healthy." To that myself replies, "I could stop any time--in fact, I stop right now."

Re: CASTLE OF THE OTTER. This is now part of CASTLE OF DAYS (an omnibus of COTA and GENE WOLFE'S BOOK OF DAYS, a collection of short stories, and a third section of previously uncollected stuff). You pretty much need it. Somebody around here quietly argues that "Books in TBOTNS" of PLAN[E]T ENGINEERING ought to have been put into CASTLE OF DAYS, and there is merriit to that notion since it is the only Urth essay in PE, and a powerful one at that.

Re: the Latin inscription. Thank you very much! That is exactly what I was hoping for--a meaning that I was angling toward and a citation that I knew nothing about. (Icing on the cake if we can find this inscription on a building =anywhere=! I can't imagine a proper context in England unless during the reign of Elisabeth I, or by associational and poetic extension, Elisabeth II?)

Re: Terminus Est. Honestly I'd never thought of it as related to words by Jesus. But sure, that looks good, and there are a lot of details in the text linking the sword to a cross (for example, when Sev leaves on his exile he basically says that he looked like a sad dude carrying a cross on his shoulder, but he felt quite happy inside). (Well, the word is "paterissa," and I've bent the sense a bit, but it is there.) You should write an essay. No, really!

=mantis=